



WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Monday, August 16, 2004, for the purpose of considering the findings of the Planning and Community Development Department study of crosswalks.

Mayor Davis called the meeting to order at 8:10 p.m. It was held in the Council Room of the Municipal Building.

PRESENT WERE: Council members Konrad E. Herling, Leta M. Mach, Edward V. J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts, and Mayor Judith F. Davis.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael McLaughlin, City Manager; Celia W. Craze, Director, Planning and Community Development; and Kathleen Gallagher, City Clerk.

ALSO PRESENT WAS: Sheldon Goldberg, Greenbelt East Advisory Committee.

Ms. Craze said they had evaluated existing crosswalks as well as locations for new crosswalks, of which 13 were recommended.

She briefly discussed the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), which governs the placement, marking and signage of crosswalks, since they are considered traffic control devices. The City has another seven years to come into compliance with the latest edition of the MUTCD. In the meantime, however, new signs must be compliant, and an effort must be made to have signs within sub-areas be consistent.

Ms. Craze said the function of pedestrian signs is to warn drivers that a pedestrian environment is imminent. She said bollards are not used at intersections because directives at the intersection govern who has right of way.

Mayor Davis asked about staffing and costs in Public Works for the maintenance of increased and enhanced crosswalks. She asked if this would have budget implications next year. Mr. McLaughlin said he thought it could be handled by the existing crew.

Noting that the time frame has slipped, Mayor Davis asked about a recommendation in the report that work near Greenbelt Elementary School be completed prior to the opening of school. Ms. Craze said that the school-related recommendations were merely enhancements, not actual safety issues, so there needed to be no public concern.

Mr. Roberts asked about the replacement of bollards for existing crosswalks. Ms. Craze said one of these (on Crescent opposite Forestway) had been suspended intentionally because of issues raised by a resident. She said they need to order new bollards to replace the one at Greenhill and Crescent.

The Mayor asked whether the recommendations had been reviewed by any advisory groups and, if not, whether that was appropriate. Ms. Craze responded that while parts

of the study were self-evident in their implications, she thought review by the Advisory Planning Board and the Public Safety Advisory Committee of the proposed locations would be appropriate. Mayor Davis suggested that ACE members also check school-related locations with the schools within the City limits to which they are liaisons.

Returning to the study, Ms. Craze noted that staff was not recommending any placement of crosswalks on private streets or at the entrance to private courts. She then went through the crosswalk survey in detail. Areas that were noted as possible problems were:

Crossing Crescent near the Police Department. Mr. Roberts said people cross this area of Crescent Road in dangerous ways. Ms. Craze said there is no safe place to cross there. She said crosswalks cannot make an unsafe area safe. There was considerable discussion of this area. Ms. Craze said she would look at a location farther east on Crescent, more in the vicinity of the bus stops.

Laurel Hill at the elementary school. There was considerable discussion of the placement of the crosswalk given the location of the crossing guard.

Sidewalks on Crescent near Parkway curve. There was considerable discussion about the lack of sidewalks at the curve and whom sidewalks would serve in that location. Mr. McLaughlin mentioned this was an area where there had been pedestrian accidents. Ms. Craze said staff did not want to encourage crosswalks and sidewalks that would divert foot traffic from interior walkways and underpasses. She said, "If we put in all these sidewalks, we're negating the underpass concept."

Crossing Kenilworth at Crescent. Mr. Herling said there have been complaints from residents who walk to the Metro station from Center City that cars turning north (especially right on red) onto Kenilworth from Crescent do not see pedestrians attempting to cross Kenilworth. Ms. Craze said this could be discussed with SHA. Mayor Davis warned they would probably solve the problem with a "no turn on red" sign.

Ms. Craze announced that Beltway Plaza had donated \$5,000 toward improving the crosswalk on Cherrywood by the Giant.

Ms. Craze said the plans for Greenbelt East could be discussed on Wednesday at the work session on the traffic-calming study.

Other Business

Mr. McLaughlin said the group developing the former Greenbelt Nursing & Rehabilitation Center site had asked to meet with Council to get an initial reaction to its plans. Council agreed to meet on August 30. The meeting will be cablecast.

Mr. McLaughlin announced that Mayor Carol Johnson's (District Heights) father had died and that services would be tomorrow.

Mr. Putens said the area around the new bridge into Schrom Hills is quite overgrown and asked that it be cut back. He said there appeared to be something malfunctioning

at the light or red light camera southbound on Kenilworth at Cherrywood and asked that it be checked. He also expressed concern regarding a statement in a memo indicating that CARES would begin giving family services priority over individual services, since Greenbelt residents in either category should be given priority over non-residents. Mr. McLaughlin said that would be the practice but that it had not been stated in the memo.

Referring to e-mail that had been exchanged on the topic of the Cherrywood-Metro Access Drive intersection, Mayor Davis said she wanted to be sure it was clear that Council had requested an accident report and asked that there be extra police patrol when possible but otherwise had not directed staff to pursue any other traffic solutions. Councilmembers agreed to wait for the accident report before any further discussion.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen Gallagher
City Clerk